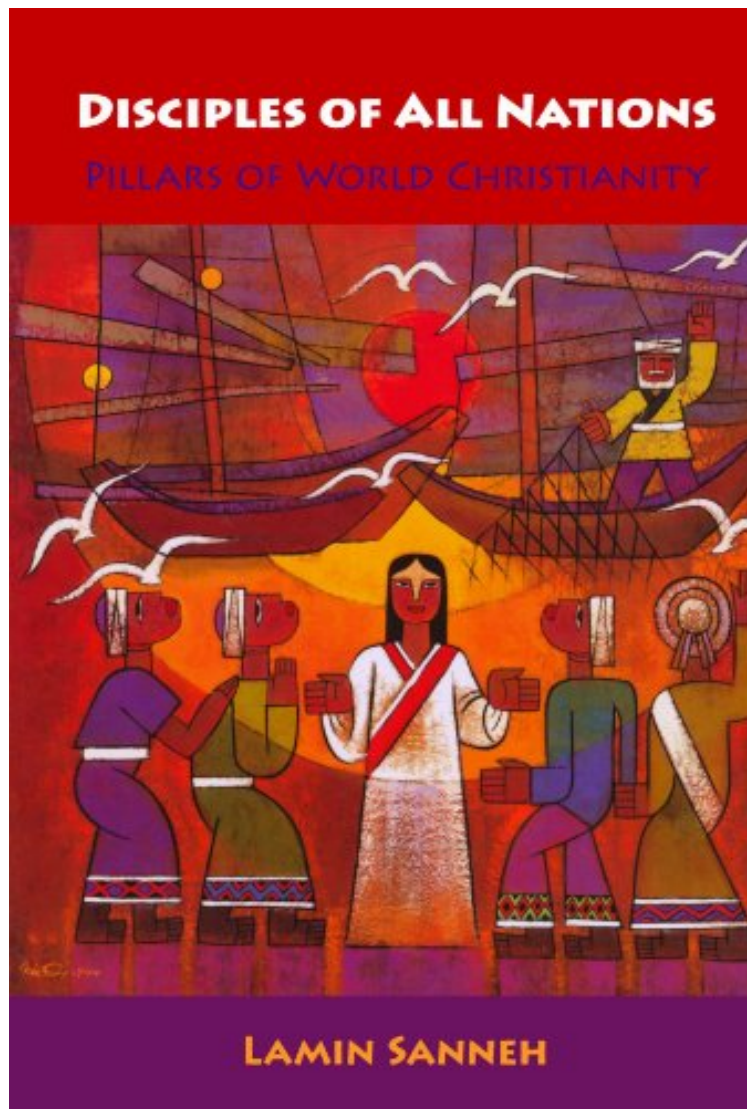


(Ebook pdf) Disciples of All Nations: Pillars of World Christianity (Oxford Studies in World Christianity)

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Lamin O. Sanneh

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Lamin O. Sanneh : Disciples of All Nations: Pillars of World Christianity (Oxford Studies in World Christianity) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Disciples of All Nations: Pillars of World Christianity (Oxford Studies in World Christianity):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. thematic discussion of world christianity with an eloquent penBy CustomerWith Disciples of All Nations, Professor of History and World Christianity at Yale University, Lamin Sanneh, continues to develop his growing corpus on World Christianity, building on previous works like, Translating

the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture (1989), and Whose Religion Is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West (2003). In writing *Disciples of All Nations*, Sanneh inaugurates the "Oxford Studies in World Christianity"--a venture that examines the "massive cultural shifts and alignments" currently underway in World Christianity. According to Sanneh, "the shift," which this series aims to address, is the relocation "in the center of gravity" of Christianity from the global north/west to the global south/east. Yet, for Sanneh, it is not that Christianity is in a terminal state in the West, but that Christianity's future is currently "being formed and shaped at the hands and minds of its non-Western adherents." Illustrative of this reality, is not simply the growth of Christianity in places like Africa--which has jumped from 9 million Christians in 1900 to 393 million Christians in 2005--but the increasing number of churches from non-Western countries becoming visible in cities in Europe and North America. Moreover, this shift has generated a complex and colorful reality in the study of Christianity as a world religion, which Sanneh describes with his elegant pen: "the growing numbers and the geographical scope of that growth, the cross-cultural patterns of encounter, the variety and diversity of cultures affected, the structural and antistructural nature of the changes involved, the kaleidoscope of cultures often manifested in familiar and unfamiliar variations on the canon, the wide spectrum of theological views and ecclesiastical traditions represented, the ideas of authority and styles of leadership that have been developed, the process of acute indigenization that fosters liturgical renewal, the production of new religious art, music, hymns, songs and prayers--all these are part of Christianity's stunningly diverse profile." In this vein the ensuing books in this new Oxford series will "be devoted to specific themes and regions within the general subject of Christianity's development as a world religion." Taken together, this series will collectively examine "post-Western developments in Christianity and in the elaborations, variations, continuities, and divergences with the originating Western forms of religion," Sanneh envisages. Nevertheless, the vision of the series is such that each book will be "conceived and written individually." In *Disciples of All Nations* Sanneh seeks to provide a "panoramic survey of the field, exploring the sources to uncover the nature and scope of Christianity's worldwide multicultural impact." As such, Sanneh's book, does not offer a clear and concise thesis. Yet, that is not to say that *Disciples of All Nations* does not put forth an argument or a particular way of reading the unfolding of Christianity as a world religion. At the heart of Sanneh's contention is that Christianity is a mission-oriented and translating religion made up diverse cultures and languages united by Jewish monotheist ideas and ethics, which emphasizes personal conversion to and fellowship with God in Jesus Christ. Supporting his view is the a theological assertion that God is "at the center of the universe of cultures, implying equality among cultures and the necessarily relative status vis--vis the truth of God." Thus, for Sanneh no culture or language has exclusive claim to God, that is, Christianity as an adaptable religion transcends culture. In Sanneh's words, "Being a translated religion, Christian teaching was received and framed in the terms of its host culture; by feeding off the diverse cultural streams it encountered, the religion became multicultural. The local idiom became a chosen vessel." In view of these assertions, Sanneh's book is organized thematically under several "pillars," by which he means motifs or sections of the book - not necessarily columns holding up the foundation of World Christianity. Throughout his discussion of these pillars, Sanneh considers the serial quality of Christianity (i.e. the "cycles of retreat and advance, of contraction and expansion, and of waning and awakening" indicative of Christianity since its inception), while thematically exploring Christianity's transmission, reception, including the various actors involved, and the disparate historical and political environments in which Christianity developed and is embodied.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Wealth of Information
By D. C. Kosobucki
Lamin Sanneh is amazingly scholarly, but this is not a book useful only to scholars. It is helpful to anyone interested in the concept of Christians communicating Christ to a non-Christian world. Sanneh knows that a personal life-changing faith in Christ is available to and transcends all cultural, linguistic, national and educational boundaries. *Disciples of All Nations* puts the Christian faith in perspective, both historically and geographically. It explores the interaction between Christians long steeped in the faith, those new to the faith and those yet completely unfamiliar with Jesus. It reminds us and informs us regarding Christianity's multicultural origins and points us to its multicultural future.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By P. KJohnson
as advertised, fast ship

Long the dominant religion of the West, Christianity is now rapidly becoming the principal faith in much of the postcolonial world--a development that marks a momentous shift in the religion's very center of gravity. In this eye-opening book, Lamin Sanneh examines the roots of this "post-Western awakening" and the unparalleled richness and diversity, as well as the tension and conflict, it has brought to World Christianity. Tracing Christianity's rise from its birth on the edge of the Roman empire--when it proclaimed itself to be a religion for the entire world, not just for one people, one time, and one place--to its key role in Europe's maritime and colonial expansion, Sanneh sheds new light on the ways in which post-Western societies in Africa, Asia, and Latin America were drawn into the Christian orbit. Ultimately, he shows, these societies outgrew Christianity's colonial forms and restructured it through their own languages and idioms--a process that often occurred outside, and sometimes against, the lines of denominational control. The effect of such changes, Sanneh contends, has been profound, transforming not only worship, prayer, and the interpretation of Scripture, but also art, aesthetics, and music associated with the church. In exploring this story of Christianity's global expansion and its current resurgence in the non-Western world, Sanneh pays close attention to

such issues as the faith's encounters with Islam and indigenous religions, as well as with secular ideologies such as Marxism and nationalism. He also considers the challenges that conservative, non-Western forms of Christianity pose to Western liberal values and Enlightenment ideas. Here then is a groundbreaking study of Christianity's role in cultural innovation and historical change--and must reading for all who are concerned with the present and future of the faith.

"Disciples of All Nations offers extraordinary insights into world Christianity today."--Journal of the American Academy of Religion "I am lost in admiration for Lamin Sanneh's magnificent study of world Christianity, for the work's geographical scope and historical sweep, and for the breadth of the author's learning. Throughout, Sanneh asks the critical question: how can we reconceive Christianity in a way that frees it from its European and imperial contexts, permitting the faith to adapt to the kaleidoscopic realities of different societies around the globe. This is a splendid achievement." --Philip Jenkins, author of *The Next Christendom* and *The New Faces of Christianity*"Been looking for a solid read on the historical advancement of Christianity through the work of missions? Then look no further." --*Evangelical Missions Quarterly*"...this work is an historical tour de force, throughout which Sanneh's pastoral voice inspires readers to embrace Christianity's 'peculiar temper' and resulting indigenous articulations. It thus merits warm recommendations, even if not as splendid as anticipated due to its uneven coverage."-- Jayson George, Brethren International "Disciples of all Nations...is written with exquisite elegance and uncommon grace..."--Peter C. Phan

About the Author Lamin Sanneh, a naturalized U.S. citizen from Gambia and the scion of an ancient African royal house, was educated on four continents. He is Professor of History and World Christianity at Yale University, and chair of its Council on African Studies. His books include *Whose Religion is Christianity?: The Gospel Beyond the West* and *The Changing Face of Christianity: Africa, the West, and the World* (coedited with Joel A. Carpenter).